

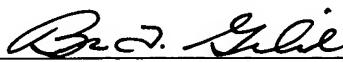


IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application Serial No: 10/017,445 Confirmation No.: 6377
Date Filed: December 14, 2001
Application Title: Methods For Determining Organisms Not Requiring The Separation Of Fixative Or Excess Probe
Applicants: Rigby et al.
Group Art Unit: 1634
Examiner: Sally A. Sakelaris
Action Date: November 19, 2003
Action Type: Second Office Action On Merits -FINAL
Certified Mail No: 7003 1680 0001 6779 2056

Certificate of Mailing Pursuant to:
37 C.F.R. §1.8

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Box AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 30th day of April, 2004.



Brian D. Gildea
Reg. No. 39,995

Reply To Office Action

Commissioner for Patents

Dear Sir or Madam:

A petition under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) for an automatic three-month extension of time to reply to the present office action has been included with the papers accompanying this submission so please consider the following response to the Office Action mailed on November 19, 2003.